

Free speech and a free press soon to be extinct
Please read and pay attention.

Re: Docket No. 02-277, the Biennial Review of the FCC's broadcast media ownership rules. In promoting its supposed goals of fair competition, diversity and local voice in today's media market, I strongly believe that the FCC should retain all of the current media ownership rules now in question. These rules serve the public interest by limiting the market power of the huge, dominant companies and players in the broadcast industry.

Each time I turn on the television and scan the cable news and other outlets I am astonished that there is such an extreme right wing bias and levels of obfuscation and outright dishonesty by the reporters. To find out that it will only get worse frankly terrifies me. Already the news stations are apparently afraid to report any opposition to the Bush administratin policies. Protestors are called traitors; and now the FCC will give more power to the mega-corporate interests!

Only c-span and overseas news show any variety of opinion. I do not believe that the studies commissioned by the FCC accurately demonstrate, or even attempt to demonstrate, the negative effects that media deregulation and consolidation have had on the diversity of our media. While there may indeed be more sources of media than ever before, the spectrum of views presented has been severely limited.

If the FCC allows our media outlets to merge and consolidate further, our ability to have an open, informed discussion from a wide variety of viewpoints will be compromised.

I urge the FCC to preserve the public interest by keeping the media ownership rules in question intact.

Also, I support the FCC's plan to hold a public hearing on this matter in Richmond, VA in February of 2003. I strongly encourage the Commission to hold similar hearings in all parts of the country and solicit the widest possible participation from the public. The rarified, lawyerly atmosphere of an FCC rulemaking is not an appropriate decision-making venue when questions as profound as the freedom of our media are at stake. I encourage the Commissioners to come out and meet some of the people who do not have a financial interest in this issue, but a social interest.

The American public has become increasingly less informed and in fear more willing to follow any action suggested by the powers that be. We need an informed public and only the media can provide this.

Soon we will be the United States of Halliburton, Enron, Bechtel - pick one, any one.....

Thank you,
Janice